



Rhode Island Emergency Management Advisory Council

MINUTES

December 20, 2005

2:00 PM

The Rhode Island Emergency Management Headquarters
645 New London Ave. – Cranston, RI

Agenda

I. Call to Order/Attendance

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 2:05 PM. In attendance were:

George J. Hickey, CCRI
Matteo Guglielmetti, RISEO
Robert Warren, EMA
Thomas Walsh, TSA
Tom McMillan, Exeter EMA
Al Tardie, Gov. Comm. On Dis.
Mike McDonough, TSA
Douglas Brown, RIPTA
Robert Thorne, TSA
Nami Moghadam, RIDOT
Thomas Kogut, RIDPUC
Angie Moncada, Red Cross

BG John L. Enright, SR., RING
Paul Stasiuk, Narragansett Electric
Leo D. Messier, PEMA
Marie Strauss, RIDEA
Leo Kennedy, Cranston Fire
Binyamin I. Efreem, Gov. Comm. On Dis.
Richard James, RIDSFM
Meredith Arnold, HARI
Michael Mulhare, RIDEM
Bernie Frezza, RIDOT
Al Contente, RIDPUC

II. Approval of Minutes from November 22, 2005

The chairman requested the approval of the previous meeting minutes from November 22, 2005 pending any corrections. The minutes were approved.

III. Introduction

- A. Comments from the Chairman and Vice-Chairman -
Chairman Fogarty began by introducing General Enright. The General wanted to stress the importance of hurricane evacuation plans. In order to finish the state plan all the local plans must be submitted.

IV. Titan Response Report – Robert Warren, *RIEMA*

Lt. Governor Fogarty introduced Robert Warren who gave an update to responses and upgrades made following the Titan report. Director Warren began by stating that out of 55 recommendations, all have been addressed with the exception of two minor administrative items. 800mhz radios are online in Washington County, Aquidneck and Providence are next, within the year. The EOC is continuing in its development, there have been several meetings with the administration and are currently inspecting the building proposed for the new EOC. RINET/MUNI has supplied computers for every EMA director, with EMA software installed. Legislatively, EMA has worked to update many laws. A copy of the update to the response can be found at the Office of Lt. Governor.

#37 on the GIS needs some work, there is a contract employee coming on board to assist Pam Pogue. #39, the alternate EOC, as of January 1, the truck will be online, and there have been preliminary discussions with Warwick. #43 requires funds from the legislature.

Lt. Governor Fogarty expressed concerns that some recommendations stated a need for compliance. General Enright noted that some of the recommendations made don't exactly fit RI, but that some more things do need work. Not having an EMA director for such a long time hurt Rhode Island.

Director Warren reiterated that of 55 points, RIEMA has already worked on over 50. Mr. Warren thinks that it may not be necessary to have someone on full time 24 hours, as point #1 suggests.

Lt. Governor Fogarty reiterated the need to stay on top of the issue and not let it fall by the wayside. There have been so many issues to focus on, that some have slipped to the back burner. One year ago there was a major conference and the Lt. Governor wants to make sure we follow up with it. Director Warren noted that there have been 18 months of issues, but there is constantly improvement, such as the Nextel hospital communications system being up and running and tested 3 times a day. General Enright noted many changes at RIEMA and the need to make sure that it continues to have the resources. Leo Messier offered up the Providence EOC as a potential back up to the state EOC.

Lt. Governor Fogarty noted that he would like the other departments addressed in the Titan Response Report to give their status on recommendations.

V. Winter Road Preparedness- Nami Moghadam, *RIDOT*

Nami Moghadam was introduced to give the status of winter road preparedness. There are 100-116 state trucks available. There is a continuous monitoring of stockpiles of sand and salt. There is a good ability to forecast a storm ahead of time, allowing DOT to prepare. DOT has a command center at the division of maintenance. Lt. Gov. Fogarty asked if there would be a problem with the stockpile like last year. Mr. Moghadam responded that one company provides the

salt and it is monitored after every storm. 11million was allocated for this year, 14m was spent last year, with 73½ inches of snow, normally RI receives 50 inches. He noted that if people notice something wrong on the roads, to call RIDOT at 222-2378. There are also cameras at major highways, roads and intersections which helps DOT monitor any developing situations.

Lt. Gov. Fogarty thanked Mr. Moghadam and expressed wishes for a calm and quiet winter.

VI. Avian Influenza Update – Dr. John Fulton, *HEALTH*

Dr. Fulton was introduced and began by noting that there is still time for one to get a flu shot for this season. The H5N1 virus is not expected to diminish anytime soon. The virus has spread to Eastern Europe. It is now infectious for longer before it becomes symptomatic. As of today there has been only one human to human transmission. Because of the infection period before becoming symptomatic, quarantine is totally impractical. HEALTH has come up with a list of vulnerable populations and had extensive cooperation from communities. Municipalities have been named as distribution points for the vaccine. There are 10 acute care facilities planned.

General Enright noted the availability of posters with information, provided by the CDC. Lt. Gov. Fogarty asked Dr. Fulton when H5N1 can be expected to hit the United States. Dr. Fulton responded that it would probably arrive in Canada first and then the US, there is no way of knowing exactly when, but he reiterated that as of yet there has been no more than one human to human transmission, which is good news. Chairman Fogarty asked what happens when the virus does hit the US, in birds. Dr. Fulton responded that HEALTH would work with DEM an urge that all who work with ducks to get their normal flu shots. It is the mix of human flu with the bird flu that creates the risk of human to human transmission for the bird flu.

VII. Domestic Preparedness Subcommittee Report - Robert Warren, *RIEMA*

In the fall, DPS listened to victims and volunteers of hurricane Katrina. As of yet, they do not know about upcoming DHS grants. A new subcommittee has been established, the subcommittee on elderly and handicap affairs and they have already begun look at the funding sources for deaf people. Lt. Governor Fogarty thanked Mr. Warren for his hard work.

VIII. New Business/Comments/Suggestions

Matteo Gugliemetti of RISEO provided an energy update. Gas is up 5 cents from last year, heat is at \$2.43 a gallon. LIHEAP is working to assist 1,200 households. 18,500 have received grants. 2,000 are pending and 2,000 more have appointments. Washington funding has still not been announced. Some are not optimistic that there will be more money than last year. Lt. Gov. Fogarty noted displeasure with this considering the fact that prices are higher and buying power has been weakened. Lt. Governor Fogarty asked if someone applied today

for heating assistance whether they would get help. Mr. Gugliemetti responded that the RISEO is hopeful that assistance would be available. It was noted that more had to be researched on conservation funding. Mr. Gugliemetti noted that RISEO works in cooperation with the Salvation Army. Gen. Enright asked for stats on gas, oil and electric assistance. Mr. Gugliemetti responded that anyone who heats with gas has been turned on, RISEO's concern is for an adequate oil supply. The northeast is ironic in that it tends to heat more with oil than gas. Mr. Gugliemetti noted that hopefully we will hear from Congress soon.

No other updates were given. Lt. Governor Fogarty thanked everyone for their hard work, professionalism and support, most especially Director Warren and General Enright.

IX. **Adjournment**

The Lt. Governor motioned to adjourn and the motion was seconded. The meeting adjourned at 3:13 P.M.